

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 288749
ORIGIN SS-25

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USNMR SHAPE BEL PRIORITY
SGC DEF WASHDC/ISA PRIORITY
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S E C R E T STATE 288749

EXDIS MILITARY ADDEES DISTRIBUTE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, MILI

SUBJECT: A-10 BASING

REFS: A. STATE 254006 (DTG 220102Z OCT 77);
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B. LONDON 18448 (DTG 091714Z NOV 77)

1. EMBASSY SHOULD DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING IN RESPONSE TO FCO'S POINTS CONTAINED IN REF B.
2. AT PRESENT THE F-4D AIRCRAFT AT BENTWATERS/WOODBIDGE (B/W) ARE PROGRAMMED TO BE WITHDRAWN FROM EUROPE AS

THE A-10S ARE INTRODUCED. HOWEVER, OUR PROPOSED FORCE BEDDOWN IS CONTINUALLY REVIEWED AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. ASSURE THE FCO THAT THEY WILL BE CONSULTED SHOULD THERE BE A CHANGE TO OUR CURRENT PROGRAM. (REF B, PARA 2A).

3. WITH THE A-10 DEPLOYMENT TO THE UK, WE INTEND TO IMPLEMENT A REARWARD MAINTENANCE/FORWARD DEPLOYMENT CONCEPT. THAT IS, B/W WILL SERVE AS A MAIN SUPPORT COMPLEX IN A REAR AREA FOR A-10 AIRCRAFT IN BOTH PEACE AND WAR. THIS SUPPORT COMPLEX WILL SERVE AS BOTH A THEATER DEPOT AND FOCAL POINT FOR LOGISTICS FOR A-10S IN EUROPE.

ALTHOUGH COMBAT SORTIES COULD BE GENERATED DIRECTLY FROM B/W, A-10S WILL OPERATE PRIMARILY FROM FORWARD OPERATING LOCATIONS (FOLS) SELECTED TO MEET THE HIGHEST ARMORED THREAT TO AFCENT. THE FOLS ARE TO BE CAPABLE OF

GENERATING HIGH SORTIE RATES IN SUPPORT OF GROUND FORCE REQUIREMENTS. ONLY MINOR MAINTENANCE AND MUNITIONS PREPARATION AND LOADING WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED AT THE FOLS WITH HEAVY MAINTENANCE BEING COMPLETED AT THE MAIN SUPPORT COMPLEX. OUR OVERALL INTENT IS TO GENERATE AS MANY COMBAT SORTIES AS POSSIBLE BY POSITIONING ONLY COMBAT CAPABLE AIRCRAFT FORWARD AND TO PROVIDE GREATER PROTECTION FOR MAINTENANCE ASSETS. (REF B, PARA 2A).

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4. THE A-10S AT B/W WILL DEPLOY FORWARD IN WARTIME TO FOLS AND THE MAJORITY OF AUGMENTATION A-10S FROM CONUS ALSO COULD BE DEPLOYED TO FOLS. BECAUSE WE WANT TO MAINTAIN A HIGH LEVEL OF COMBAT CAPABLE AIRCRAFT AT THE FOLS, A POOL OF AIRCRAFT WILL BE AVAILABLE AT B/W TO FILL IN FOR COMBAT LOSSES OR FOR AIRCRAFT REQUIRING MAJOR MAINTENANCE. THIS POOL OF A-10S PLUS THOSE AIRCRAFT UNDERGOING MAINTENANCE WILL UTILIZE THE SHELTERS AT B/W. THEREFORE WE VIEW THE SHELTERS AT B/W AS CENTRAL TO PROTECTION OF AIRCRAFT AT THE MAIN SUPPORT COMPLEX. (REF B, PARA 2C).

5. THE EXPANSION OF GREENHAM COMMON IS ONE BASING OPTION NOW BEING ADDRESSED BY THE AIR STAFF. FURTHER STAFFING IS REQUIRED TO SPECIFICALLY DEFINE THE COSTS OF SUCH A MOVE. APPROVAL OF THE APPROPRIATE UK AUTHORITY WILL BE SOUGHT IF THE AIR FORCE PURSUES SUCH AN EXPANSION. (REF B, PARA 2B).

6. WE SHARE FCO'S CONCERN OVER FURTHER LEAKS CONCERNING THE A-10 DEPLOYMENT. DOD IS CURRENTLY WORKING TO DECLASSIFY THE DEPLOYMENT AND IS PREPARING A DRAFT PUBLIC

ANNOUNCEMENT WHICH WILL BE FORWARDED IN THE NEAR FUTURE
FOR UK APPROVAL. (REF B, PARA 3).

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